

INShape Indiana's "Dandy-Dozen" Fitness Activities for Summer

Summer is finally here, and it's vitally important for young Hoosiers to remain active, healthy, and busy during summer break. To keep kids physically active, INShape Indiana suggests a variety of fun, summer activities for children of all skill levels. Parents should encourage children to properly warm-up, stretch, and cool-down before and after all physical activities. It's also important that children stay well-hydrated. If kids are playing outdoors, make sure to properly apply sunscreen. Let the kids choose the activities they like best, and make FUN the focus of participating in such activities.

1. Baseball- America's favorite pastime is a great way for everyone to get some sun and have some fun while being active. Baseball is the leading outdoor sport in the United States.
2. Volleyball- The whole family can play this fun sport, either indoors or outdoors, over the summer. Volleyball requires hand/eye coordination, strength, and teamwork. Knee pads are also required to avoid injury.
3. Swimming- Nothing beats splashing around a pool with friends. Swimming offers a full-body workout for all ages. Swimming lessons are recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics for children ages four and up.
4. Soccer- This highly active game involves a lot of endurance, agility, and teamwork. To keep kids injury-free, be sure they're appropriately attired with protective equipment, such as shin guards and shoes with rubber or plastic cleats.
5. Bicycle Riding- Riding is a fun activity for the whole family. Experts suggest children ride on the sidewalks and paths until they are at least 10 years old, show good riding skills, and are able to follow the rules of the road. Helmets are absolutely necessary for children and adults.
6. Inline-Skating- Inline-skating can be both fun and safe as long as appropriate protective gear is worn, such as a helmet, wrist guards, and kneepads.
7. Basketball- Basketball is ideal for developing hand/eye coordination, endurance, and teamwork. Encourage children under the age of seven to use a softer, smaller ball, and lower the height of the goal if possible.
8. Board Sports- Whether snowboarding in the winter or skate-boarding year-round, kids love to be on a board. However, risk of injury is higher for these sports. Kids should always wear helmets to prevent head injuries while snowboarding and/or skateboarding.
9. Dancing- Dancing encourages kids to be creative and move their bodies freely. There are many new video games available that challenge opponents to follow a dance routine while watching the video. Kids can spend time learning new moves while also getting a good workout.
10. Jumping Rope- An old favorite, jump rope is still popular on most school playgrounds. Whether alone or in a group, jumping rope challenges coordination and stamina.
11. Martial Arts- Martial arts are a great way to get kids involved in a sport that increases strength, coordination, and mental discipline. Proper training and equipment are necessary for injury prevention.

12. Obstacle Courses- Challenge kids to use a variety of athletic skills by setting up an obstacle course at the park using playground equipment or other items, such as jump ropes, balls, and cones.

Remember to have fun, stay safe, and be active this summer. To find fun activities any time of the year, visit www.INShape.IN.gov.